OpenBudgets.eu: Fighting Corruption with Fiscal Transparency

Project Number: 645833  Start Date of Project: 01.05.2015  Duration: 30 months

Deliverable D7.4

Educational material/resources

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**Abstract:** This document addresses the promotion of citizens and other stakeholders engagement in the pre and post budget decision-making process in three ways: an inventory of participatory budgeting manuals and accompanying recommendations for tutorial making, an FAQ for the participatory budgeting tools (D7.2 and D7.3) and an outline for tutorials that will provide context for participatory budgeting tools and financial transparency tools as developed in OpenBudgets.eu

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History

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<td>0.1</td>
<td>30.09.2016</td>
<td>Initial draft</td>
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<td>0.2</td>
<td>31.10.2016</td>
<td>Added Section two (FAQ) and three (outlook)</td>
<td>Johanna zum Felde</td>
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<tr>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>03.11.2016</td>
<td>Review</td>
<td>Nicolas Kayser Bril, Amir Campos</td>
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<tr>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>03.11.2016</td>
<td>Final Version</td>
<td>Johanna zum Felde</td>
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Executive Summary

In a democracy, budgets are a key instrument of policy making. They are the result of an extensive and complex process, traditionally executed by the political leadership. The decisions involving budgets have the potential to affect the lives of citizens on the entire social spectrum by shifting focus to one priority over another, by introducing change to the environment, or by impacting long-term nexuses.

The idea behind the concept of participatory budgeting is to provide citizens with an opportunity to impact the decision-making process behind budgets. In order for this process to be feasible, several preconditions need to be met, because a participatory process needs participating citizens. Whereas this may sound ridiculous, it actually summarizes a complex challenge: for the electorate to participate, it needs to be made aware of the existence of a participatory budgeting process, it needs to learn certain aspects about it, and it needs to perceive its efforts as yielding results. Learning materials, tutorials and online portals explaining the process are the central instruments to overcome these challenges.

This deliverable includes three sections. An investigation to map best practices for conveying the use of participatory budgeting instruments by examining a number of concrete examples taken from existing implementations. Second, a tutorial for the tool D.7.2 for influencing budget allocation and the tool D.7.3 tool for monitoring budget execution. Third an outline of future tutorial making plans.

The review of the various materials (manuals, handbooks, guidebooks, flyers, etc.) has shown that successful examples are well-structured, brief without neglecting detail, attractive, findable, engaging, and in some cases innovative. Moreover, a highly important aspect is accountability, meaning that the outcomes of the process need to be communicated in a way that reaches the participants and demonstrates the consequences of their efforts. Expert interviews have been conducted to enrich the findings with tacit knowledge, thus enabling the outcomes of this report to serve as inspiration for future reports.

The tutorial for the participatory budgeting interface builds on the inventory of existing educational resources for participatory budgeting. Central learnings of the inventory relevant for the educational resources are logical structure, going by questions users/participants might have, using simple language, offering different levels of engagement and different levels of information. A lot of information relevant to participants in participatory budgeting processes is context-specific. The difficulty here is about finding the right balance between simplifying and the need the specify. Therefore the FAQ should be enriched with context-specific information by each organizer of the individual Participatory Budgeting process in a city or municipality. Finally, we outline the future tutorials that will provide context for participatory budgeting tools and financial transparency tools as developed in OpenBudgets.eu.
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1. Introduction

The objective of WP7 is to facilitate and promote the engagement of citizens and other stakeholders in the pre and post budget decision-making process. To do so, stakeholders will be given means and tools to influence and give feedback on budget allocations. Public administrations will have the instruments to receive and effectively manage the feedback received, enabling greater degrees of active citizen involvement and participation.

In most cases budget preparation and approval is a closed-door process within administrations. Citizens and other stakeholders usually stay outside the process impeded by factors such as lack of resources to influence decisions, lack of understanding of the different budget concepts and line items, and ignorance of the approval process. On the other side, public administrations, especially at local and regional level, perceive participatory processes as high cost and difficult to manage experiments. Implementing tailor-made digital solutions in small and medium size cities/regions can be expensive and difficult to implement, particularly in an expenditure-reduction context.

This deliverable focuses on the tool created to address some of the problems identified by citizens and public administrations. The final aim is to enable real participatory experiences and decision-making processes, providing solutions that are easy to implement by all stakeholders involved, thus strengthening the democratic process. Three deliverables are closely related:

- **D7.2** is a tool where citizens can express their budget allocation priorities during the budget approval process, along the lines and within the process defined by each administration concerned. This tool will fundamentally target municipalities.
- **D7.3** is a tool where citizens can monitor budget transactions, auditing budget compromised vs. actual spending and giving feedback to the administrations.
- **D7.4** the Educational resources for citizens, will provide online materials to understand i.e. the budget cycle, terms used or how to influence and monitor the budget.

Special attention will be given to:

- Ensuring transparency during the participation process, so every stakeholder can access information about the feedback sent and its effective impact in the decisions made.
- Increasing competences and capabilities, developing the necessary resources for the different participants to make informed decisions.
- Providing structured and valuable information to public administrations, avoiding fragmented or too broad feedback, which does not contribute to making decisions.
2. Section 1: How to Make Participatory Budgeting Tutorials: An Inventory

1. Introduction

The public budget manifests clear political priorities and sets public commitments in the allocation of resources. This makes it one of the most important policy documents a government produces.¹

Porto Alegre— in Brazil, in 1989—for the first time opened up the city’s annual budget to include citizens in the process of deciding how the city’s resources should be spent. Since then, up to 50,000 residents have decided each year on the allocation of as much of 20% of the city’s annual budget.² Many cities and municipalities have followed the example of Porto Alegre so that we now have participatory budgeting processes in over 1,500 cities across Europe, North America, Latin America, Asia, and Africa.³

Per definition participatory budgeting is an approach which allows citizens to deliberate and negotiate over the distribution of public resources. Participatory budgeting can be applied at local, regional or national level.⁴ In contrast, citizens budgets are budgets (national, local, regional) specifically designed for a general audience. The key public finance information is typically written in accessible language and incorporates visual elements to help non-specialist readers understand it.⁵

Participatory budgeting and citizen budgets carry the potential to improve government efficiency, build greater trust between citizens and government, support collective decision-making capacity, and in some cases even generate more tax revenues according to some.⁶ Still, many participatory budgeting processes do not live up to their full potential. The needs assessment (deliverable 7.1) expressed the need of clear information policies and the call for new educational policies on participation at a local, regional and national level.⁷

This research sets out to map best practices for participatory budgeting tutorials, led by the question how tutorials can be used as tools to convey complex topics such as participatory budgeting. This research looks at information material distributed in participatory budgeting processes including manuals, handbooks, guidebooks, flyers and other forms such as videos. How do they simultaneously fulfil the roles of giving clear information and encouraging participation and what can we learn from that for future tutorial writing?

¹ Reames with Lynott “Involving Citizens in Public Budgets”, 6.
² Participatory Budgeting Project “Examples of PB”.
³ Tiago Peixoto “Where has it worked”.
⁴ Wampler “Participatory Budgeting”.
⁵ International Budget Partnership “CITIZENS BUDGETS”.
⁶ Reames with Lynott “Involving Citizens in Public Budgets”, 6.
⁷ Open Budgets.eu “Needs assessment and gap analysis”, 35.
2. Methodology

2.1. Examination Categories

We have made an inventory of 22 participatory budgeting manuals, and examined these against 8 categories. This inventory was complemented by two expert interviews and the study of secondary literature.

We have selected 8 categories for examination based on three different sources. Only one source specifically looks at information on judging participatory budgeting processes “Die Gestaltung von Infobroschüren zum Bürgerhaushalt – Worauf sollte geachtet werden?”.8

Since there is little existing research on quality categories for participatory budgeting manuals, we have additionally looked at Horsleys9 judging criteria for the quality of educational materials and the “Evaluation and Selection of Learning Resources: A Guide”10 by the PEI Department of Education: Evaluation and Selection of Learning Resources are looking at educational material in general.

- Structure
- Understandability
- Visualizations
- Innovation and flair
- Quality and correctness of content, scope (range) of topics and appropriateness of depth
- Accountability and context information
- Promotes engagement

2.2. Inventory Material

We have selected 22 manuals based on pioneers named in Fundación Civio’s report and geographic spread. Valuable sources for finding different participatory budgeting processes and manuals across the world were, the map by the Participatory Budgeting Project11, the Participaedia case studies12 and buergerhaushalt.org13.

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8 Bürgerhaushalt “Die Gestaltung von Infobroschüren zum Bürgerhaushalt – Worauf sollte geachtet werden?”.
9 Dargusch, Persaud, Horsley “Judging the quality of educational materials – a research project on student voice”, 48.
11 Tiago Peixoto “Where has it worked”.
12 Participedia “Cases”.
13 Bürgerhaushalt.
The geographic spread in our sample contains six manuals from the United States (US), one from Canada, two from the United Kingdom (UK), eight from Germany, one from France, one from Spain, one from India, one from Brazil and one from South Africa. Those from the US and the UK are distinctive as rulebooks seem an established form. Manuals from Germany are more complex. The limited number of manuals examined from the Global South can be attributed to the language issue, and limitations on online availability.

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2.3. Interviews

Additionally, two interviews with experts for educational information in a political context were done. The first interviewee works with participatory budgeting for an organisation specialising in participation in Germany. The second respondent is an expert in media communication in Germany. The interviews were semi-structured and approximately 30 minutes long.

3. Analysis of Manuals
3.1. Structure

Regarding the structure of the manuals it is important that the layout is logical and consistent. Therefore, a well structured table of contents is essential, including hierarchies in headlines, listings and info boxes. Fonts should be readable and special attention needs to be paid to matching line spacing and creating meaningful paragraphs. For the latter, subheadings are a useful instrument; they are a good eye-catcher. It allows the reader to only focus on those sections they are interested in and to quickly find relevant sections.

“Ideally the brochure is structured by questions citizens have on their mind and the corresponding answers to these questions.” Many manuals are clearly structured according to the principal categories of process, goals, timeline and roles. Some include additional information on the background of the budgeting process in general or results from last year. The more information is included, the more relevant an accurate structure becomes. When the text is insufficiently structured, too much information gets mixed up and it becomes difficult to fully digest the provided information.

The manuals from the US that we have studied, seem to suggest that in the US a standard has been established in the form of a rulebook of approximately 10-15 pages, detailing the participatory budgeting process, the roles of different actors in the process, the timeline of the entire process and precise goals. The best examples are the rulebooks of Boston and New York.

In Germany much more contextual information is given, often spread across several documents. This quickly leads to a loss of oversight. This is for example the case in Treptow-Köpenick where various types of information are brought together in a 103 page long Powerpoint presentation. This makes it rather difficult to find what you are looking for. Additionally, information only is provided in short bullet points. Finally, Treptow-Köpenick releases an “A-Z” document, a glossary explaining the specific terms of the budget process. For the latter, it is hard to know whether this would even help participants as the terms are quite specific and it is difficult to imagine that participants have ever encountered those terms before.

14 Bürgerhaushalt “Die Gestaltung von Infobroschüren zum Bürgerhaushalt – Worauf sollte geachtet werden?”.  
15 Bürgerhaushalt “Interview mit Frau Prof. Dr. Weber – „Fachdaten einfach aufbereiten“.  
16 Ibid.  
17 Interview with participatory budgeting expert, Germany.  
Stuttgart combines basic information on the process with detail and background information in one document, but clearly distinguishes the two from each other by presenting them into two separate parts.

3.2. Understandability

To be understandable, concepts should be clearly introduced, developed and summarized. In addition, it is of importance that instructional goals and learner objectives are clearly stated. The language of the readers should be spoken. Difficult words are best avoided. Instead, active verbs and easy sentences should be preferred which does not necessarily mean short sentences. Longer sentences are acceptable but they should not be interlaced. A mix between long and short sentences is advisable. It is also important that citizens are directly addressed and a thread runs through the whole text which connects single paragraphs.

If specialized terms and jargon such as “amortization”, “balance sheet”, “the annual yield”, “consolidation” or “cost allocation” cannot be avoided, they have to be explained. One possibility is the inclusion of a glossary in the handbook itself, as we find in the handbook of Maintal. Also Porto Alegre publishes a glossary, but only on their website. However, as a general rule, jargon should be avoided so that the need for a glossary is minimised.

Understandability according to the above definition is not the case in the manuals that we have studied. Concepts or learning objectives are not clear and language remains very plain and on the surface. Most of the manuals from the US and the UK only explain the participatory process but little about the budget in general, a good example is the Cambridge rulebook. This is acceptable if additional information can be found in other places.

The Treptow-Köpenick manual mixes both, rules and background information and the Powerpoint format and bullet points do not allow further explanation or story building. A positive example is the manual of Potsdam, it uses a lot of examples and explanatory language. Examples of questions asked: “How does the budget influence you personally?

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23 Bürgerhaushalt “Die Gestaltung von Infobroschüren zum Bürgerhaushalt – Worauf sollte geachtet werden?”.

24 Interview with participatory budgeting expert, Germany.


How often and where does the tram go? Which books are available in your local library? Is there enough room in the Kindergarten closest to you? Do you like to go by bike? Through these questions it is shown how the budgeting process impacts everyone. In addition, the Potsdam manual shows examples of budget posts that were admitted during the last budgeting cycle using pictures. Finally, contexts such as city tasks and growing city structures and how that relates to the city’s budget, are explained. Even the visualizations are contributing to the manuals explanatory power, clearly showing revenue, expenditure and amount allocated for participatory budgeting processes (Figure 1).

### 3.3. Visualisations

The design and the visuals must be interesting and effective, the text needs to relate to the visualisations. As one of the interviewees pointed out: “Many brochures which can be downloaded online are not well designed. They do not look like something to be handed out. If somehow possible, numbers should not be pure numbers but visualized in diagrams, graphics and comparisons.” Or, as the German guide to participatory budgeting manual writing states: “Appealing design also includes how colours are chosen for example in diagrams: not too colourful and colours chosen in a consistent way. If one specific for one budget area is used in a diagram, then same colour should be used in all the diagrams.”

30 Interview with participatory budgeting expert, Germany.
31 Bürgerhaushalt “Die Gestaltung von Infobroschüren zum Bürgerhaushalt – Worauf sollte geachtet werden?”.
In this report we have selected three design principles that are most relevant for manual writing. First, items or issues that are related to one another need to be in close proximity, as the viewer will instantly relate these two. This is true for visuals but also for corresponding texts. Second, items and issues portrayed in a similar way, are seen by the reader as belonging to each other. Third, cleaner and simpler forms are easier to identify and understand than complex ones.

To provide an example, this section goes into depth into one of the most commonly used figures to visualise budget allocation: pie charts. They are used to clearly visualise division of the total in relative parts. However, they are often wrongly arranged in a way that fits with the page layout. Attention should be paid to the following: You start in the 12 o’clock position and put the biggest element right of that, the second in seize left of that. We see a clock in pie charts that’s why we look at the 12 o’clock position first. It is also possible to arrange the parts of the pie chart clockwise as long as the rule of starting with the important segments at the 12 o’clock position is not neglected. This is often done wrong as the smaller segments are put first or the segments are arranged according to how the colours match. The number of segments per chart should not be higher than five, otherwise comparison becomes difficult with too many colours to assign. If used correctly, the pie chart is a powerful instrument, as are tree maps, slope graphs, line-graphs and other visualisations that show both division of the whole in parts, and allocation. A good example we found was the pie chart in the Paris manual.

\[\text{Figure 2: A well done pie chart in the Paris manual}\]
3.4. Innovation and flair

Innovation and flair refer to new approaches in design and form of manuals. We live in a world of social media and multimedia approaches, hence new forms of delivering information can be explored in order to increase engagement. This could be a video, transparency of processes and information integrated into the voting platform, a participatory writing approach or a design that catches our attention so that we want to know more. A pdf document might not always be the best way to reach citizens anymore, but can be a good additional - traditional - resource.

For citizens who are already interested the format is less essential. However, to reach new audiences it is extremely important.\(^35\) A fresh approach, imagery, layout, presentation, pace, topics, suggested activities, and instructional design all serve to instigate interest in the content.

The look of the front page is key. The word ‘Budget’ is not attractive.\(^36\) Even worse is the German word “Haushalt”, which in German not only has the meaning of a “budget” but also means daily chores in family life or “household”. Instead, Boston calls it “Million Dollar Vote Fest”\(^37\), making it much more attractive to voters.

The participatory budgeting expert from Germany has an innovative idea for a very participatory approach to design a handbook:

“A good option is to put different questions, which need to be answered on the front page: “What was saved during the years and how much expenditures for culture were there. It would be great to develop a brochure in a participatory way. For example a Czech organisation invited citizens and asked them what they would like to know to include it in the handbook.”\(^38\)

Some administrations and organisations go beyond the format of a handbook. Short videos on the websites are a good way to attract new audiences which might not have looked at a longer document directly but might turn there after having watched a short video. A video should not be much longer than two minutes. Examples for videos like that are Boston\(^39\) and Stuttgart\(^40\).

The website by St. Louis participatory budgeting gives a very simple introduction asking to...
“GET INVOLVED AND HELP DETERMINE HOW MONEY IS SPENT IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD” and offers the choice between learning more and directly getting involved. This distinguishes those who directly want to get involved from those who want to know more. However only little information follows when clicking the buttons. Most information is on the bottom of the landing page which is not indicated clear. The choice of the buttons with colours red and green can be optimized as well to help citizens with the not uncommon inability to distinguish red and green. The same website shows the view from underneath one of the cities most famous landmarks which offers a way for the citizens to identify with the city’s cause.

Figure 3: Encouraging design on the St. Louis participatory budgeting website

The platform of the city of Cologne is innovative in terms of transparency. Not only can citizens pitch their own ideas, they can also directly see how many votes in favour and against an idea were received. In addition citizens are allowed to comment and review comments made.

Figure 4: Transparency in Cologne’s participatory budgeting portal

3.5. Quality of content, range of topics and appropriateness of depth

The importance of the quality and correctness of content is unquestionable. Facts and numbers should be accurate. Although, the mere frequency of citing numbers does not automatically translate to quality. As a general rule, a manual should only address what is essential to understand and do participatory budgeting. The scope and range of topics presented in the manual and the appropriate level of depth and difficulty of the materials offered depends on the intended audience, and the goal of the manual.

You rarely find wrong information in the brochures. Most brochures are written by experts who know about their subject, namely the budget and the budgeting process. Key is to communicate this expertise in such a way it is understandable to the general public. This

requires cooperation between the experts and communication professionals. As our interviewee from the participatory budgeting program underlines: “Early in the process of guidebook making it should be considered what information citizens want to know and which questions they specifically have. A common question is for example why the city is in debt. This needs to be answered.”

44 We find such clear answers in the handbook for Potsdam, the handbook of Troisdorf, and the handbook of Maintal. In Potsdam’s handbook the answer to that question is the growth of the city. Troisdorf finds a good way to go beyond facts and numbers and the handbook of Maintal is another good example for it’s appropriateness of content.

A balance between too much and too little needs to be found. Surprisingly, our interviewee gives a very clear number on length and format: “As a general rule, it should not be much longer than 15-20 pages in an A5 format.”

45 The brochures of Maintal and Cologne follow this rule indeed. Toronto housing has all information in one page, which only leaves room for the most necessary information. It can be argued that the housing budget is a limited one which needs less space, but a bit more background would have been helpful. Treptow-Köpenicks 103 pages Powerpoint is too extensive and the glossary simply overwhelming. Finally, St. Louis only offers very little information on the website.

The last thing to keep in mind is that handbooks are not the right format for citizens who want to know more: “They should rather be directed on the website, where they can find more information.”

46 A rule of thumb: as much information as necessary, as little information as possible. Additional support materials should be offered to those participants interested in specific details, but this can be done in other forms, online, booklets etc.

3.6. Accountability and context information

A well written tutorial does not suffice to make a participatory budgeting process a success, the manual needs to provide insight in the political process and report on the (intended) results of the participatory budgeting exercise. Conditions and context such as the amount of budget to be decided on and the likelihood of the government adopting the suggestions and proposed allocations are crucially important. In addition, it needs to answer the following questions: What were the results of the last participatory budgeting process? How many suggestions were agreed on? Finally, a follow up to the participatory process and the eventual implementation of decisions made in this process is key.

44 Interview with participatory budgeting expert, Germany.
46 Manual for Troisdorf, based on description in the interview with participatory budget expert.
48 Interview with participatory budgeting expert, Germany.
50 Manual for Cologne, based on description in the interview with participatory budget expert.
51 Interview with participatory budgeting expert, Germany.
52 Bürgerhaushalt "Interview mit Frau Prof. Dr. Weber – „Fachdaten einfach aufbereiten".
To be accountable per definition is “to proof, usually in a written form (e.g., in a report), on what basis actions are or are not executed or how things, money and material assets, are dealt with and where they remain/have remained.” In the context of participatory budgeting accountability primarily refers to the written feedback on how the ideas developed in the process have been taken forward, and an explanation to whether a suggestion had been taken up or not. In general, accountability also includes an explanation of the entire process itself. This is in most cases provided in an accountability report after the final council decision on the suggested ideas that resulted from the participatory budgeting process. Some cities and municipalities even have a continuous monitoring during the implementation in place.

The example of participatory budgeting process in Hamburg shows why accountability is important. The number of participants in Hamburg decreased from 3000 in 2006 to only 600 in the following process in 2009. In 2006, the three proposals were selected during the plenary session of the participatory budgeting process. However, the results of those proposals or a follow up to the process was not published, which provoked the participants and was met with criticism in the press. During the second participatory budgeting round in 2009 “some of the local media questioned the value of the participatory budgeting because of the comparatively few political consequences of the first one.”

Cologne does better as it releases a separate statement of the administration (status report) and the council decisions on the public’s ideas. In this report, the decision on

![Beispiele realisierter Bürgervorschläge](image)

Figure 5: Pictures of realised citizen suggestions in Potsdam Manual

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53 Wikt. “Rechenschaft ablegen”.
54 Bürgerhaushalt “Bürgerhaushalte und Rechenschaft”, 4.
55 Ibid.
57 Luehrs; Rolf. “Hamburg (DE) e-Participatory Budgeting”.
implementation are explained by highlighting the criteria on which the decisions are based and providing examples. London\textsuperscript{59} even has a tick box system in place that shows the actual state of a suggested idea, answering the following questions: has this idea been implemented in the former budget cycle in 2009? Is it provided by the third sector?, and is it a new project or an additional service?\textsuperscript{71}. Finally, Potsdam\textsuperscript{60} uses some realised ideas from the past process in the beginning of the current guidebook.

![Figure 6: Tickbox system showing the status of each idea in the London manual\textsuperscript{61}](https://www.google.com/url?q=https://buergerbeteiligung.potsdam.de/sites/default/files/documents/140610_infoheft_buehh-201516.pdf&sa=D&ust=1475140585337000&usg=AFQjCNExyC2neZlobOdkqLABb8dSj2HCUg)

### 3.7. Promoting engagement

A well written manual promotes engagement, the manual has to both explain the process and motivate people to participate. Taking into account the categories as we laid them out in this report - structure, understandability, visualisation, innovation and flair, quality of the content and appropriate levels of depth, and accountability - helps to create engagement. Additionally, different engagement forms and opportunities need to be offered and, because the inclusiveness of the process is prerogative, special attention needs to be paid to language considering gender, ethics and race.

A guidebook that considers gender, ethics and race seems as obvious as participatory budgeting in itself. It is supposed to be a process that includes those in the budgeting process who were not part of it before. The city of Chicago even mentions equity and inclusion as primary goals in its budgeting process. However, through inappropriate language, and discrimination of any kind, the inclusionary effect that participatory budgeting is supposed to have is nullified.

To motivate people to participate questions such as: why, for whom, with which goal, and which result should be addressed in the manual. First, different actors and institutions need to be introduced and processes be clear. Second, it should be foreseeable how much effort and time participating requires. A good option is to offer different levels of engagement so that a citizen can decide how much they want to get involved, based on their own time-constraints, duties, and abilities. If citizens cannot fulfil what is expected, and the demands on their time are high, they might feel like they will look bad in public and therefore not engage at all.\textsuperscript{62} In Cologne, the minimum participation is simply to vote on the proposed


\textsuperscript{62} Interview with media pedagogy expert, Germany.
ideas. If participants can invest more time, they can suggest ideas and participate in the process in full.

3.8. Findability

A brochure can be outstanding but if no one finds it, it is of no use. Therefore, the information needs to be easy to find. This is important for online as well as for printed versions of the guidebook. A possible approach is to analyse the right communication channels by considering the citizenry as specific groups and audiences: the young, the elderly, women etc. How can you reach specific groups such women, elderly, migrants or a young audience? Where do they spend time and how can you reach them there?

On webpages for participatory budgeting processes the manuals are often quite hidden and an extensive search for them is necessary. They are uploaded on a subpage or a subpage of a subpage and between 5-15 downloadable documents are available. In Spandau, for example, there are 15 different documents that can be downloaded. The guidebook should be accessible in one click from the landing page.

On hard copy material, our respondent from the participation organisation says the following: “Printed versions should be available during the participatory budgeting cycle for example in gatherings that allow participation in the budgeting process in person. Also they should be available in the mobilisation phase where it should be handed out during info events. Another option is sending a shorter flyer in the direct mail while navigating the citizens to additional information online. An example for this is the six pages long flyer made by the city of Cologne. Of course it is also possible to have a stock of the brochures or flyers lying in buildings of the public administration, but it can also be seen critically: Why should citizens look at the brochure if it is not connected to the possibility of participation?“

Finally, spread the information about the participatory budgeting process in those places where the current contested themes in politics are already discussed. These can be community centres, youth clubs, etc. but also the local playground, especially if that is on the agenda. To amplify the impact of the outreach it makes sense to announce the participatory budgeting process in the traditional media. Pune for example announced that it is calling for project idea submissions in the leading newspaper Marathi daily.

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63 Flyer for Cologne, based on description in the interview with participatory budgeting expert.
64 Interview with participatory budgeting expert, Germany.
65 Interview with media pedagogy expert, Germany.
66 Wiktionary “Rechenschaft ablegen.”
3. Conclusion

Tutorials for participatory budgeting need to simultaneously fulfil the role of giving clear information and of encouraging participation. This report shows that in order to do that, it needs to answer to a large range of components. The foundations are a clear structure, understandable language and corresponding visualisations. The quality and correctness of content, the scope of topics and appropriateness of depth is very much related to understandability. ‘As much information as necessary, as little information as possible’ in the language of the audience should be provided. In addition, the information needs to be findable. It should be available through different channels according to where the citizens can be reached. A hidden link on the websites subpage, possibly among several documents is certainly not enough.

An often neglected but extremely important aspect is accountability. What were the results of the last budgeting process? How did these results get implemented? Leaving such questions unanswered may have a negative impact on the number of citizens getting involved in the future. Offering different levels of engagement such as voting and suggesting an idea, will further help citizens to understand the nature of the process, and allow them to decide how strong they want to commit to it in the future.

Innovative approaches use new formats such as videos or information integrated into web tools. They have a design that directly appeals to citizens and promote the wish to find out more. Most importantly, innovative approaches for tutorials include citizens in the design process, which allows the final product to directly address the questions citizens might have asked.
and to adjust it to the language citizens use. Even after the publication, the tutorials should be open for citizens to change and redistribute the information, so that they can become themselves multipliers for participatory budgeting.

4. Manual Do’s and Don’t’s

- The page number of the main manual should not exceed 15-20 pages. Otherwise the amount might seem overwhelming.
- Central questions ‘why, for whom and with which goal and for what results’ should be addressed in the document. Concretely this means a timeline, goals, process and roles.
- Additional background information should be offered, ideally in a different document or clearly structured in the second half of the document.
- The language of the reader should be used: explanatory language and examples help citizens understand the process.
- Results of participatory budgeting processes need to be clear otherwise it can harm future engagement.
- Different stages of engagement such as voting and suggesting ideas allow citizens to estimate their involvement and to engage as much as they would like to.
- The information should be accessible. This requires using the channels and reaching out in places where different citizen groups, such as youngsters, women, elderly, already are.

5. Section 2: You decide where the money goes - FAQ

The You decide where the money goes - FAQ deliverable accompanies the participatory budgeting tools D7.2 Tool for influencing budget allocation and D.7.3 Tool for monitoring budget execution.

The FAQ builds on the inventory of existing educational resources for participatory budgeting. Central learnings of the inventory relevant for the educational resources are:

- hierarchical structure,
- go by questions users/participants might have,
- use simple language,
- offer different levels of engagement and different levels of information.

We followed the learnings from the inventory report where possible. However, a lot of information relevant to participants in participatory budgeting processes is context specific. The difficulty here is about finding the right balance between simplifying and the need the specify. Therefore, the FAQ should be enriched with context specific information by each organizer of the individual Participatory Budgeting process in a city or municipality. The educational material provided here clearly signifies questions where context specific
information should be added.

The ideal way to apply the learnings to the tools is an FAQ section which is directly integrated into the website and covering the most common questions users might have and divided into the subsections 1. General questions, 2. Process voting, 3. Process result, 4. Process announcement, 5. Advanced questions and 6. Context specific questions. The matter of integration into the website is planned as a hierarchical structure where the user can unfold first the categories and then the questions in a category.

General questions

1. Why should I participate?
The local budget impacts your life. How often does the bus go from your home to your workplace? Is there a connection at all? If you prefer to go by bicycle, how are the cycling conditions in your town? Do you like to visit public parks, libraries or the theatre? Whether they exist and which quality they have depends mainly on the money available in your local budget. The budget sets the amount of funding that is allocated for developments in your region and you can help to decide how it is allocated. What do you want your city to be like? You decide!

2. How much time does my participation take and can I decide how much I want to get involved?
It is up to you how much much time you want to spend. Registering and voting takes approximately 5 - 10 minutes. Of course, the amount of time spent depends on the number of proposals, their length, and your engagement with the proposals. The filter section on the left of the page can help you quickly find proposals you are interested in. Also your time-investment in the monitoring phase can vary, depending on your availability. You can monitor all of the proposals, only those which you voted on, or you can even comment on the decisions made by your city or region.

Process voting

3. Who can participate in the voting process?
Generally, everyone living in the municipality implementing a participatory budgeting process, can vote. Identification requirements depend on your city or municipality.

4. How can I participate in the voting process?
In order to participate you need to to click on the green START VOTING button in the middle of the landing page inside of the second box titled Process voting. You'll be asked to sign in. To sign in, enter your e-mail-address and click on the green button E-Mail me a link to sign in in the centre of the page. Then, you should receive an e-mail with the subject Voter verification token. Click on the link provided in the mail to get back to the OpenBudgets page and start voting. You'll be asked to provide
your name, a password is not required. Do check your SPAM filter if you can not find the e-mail right away.

Figure 1: The landing page

Figure 2: The sign-in interface
5. **How many proposals can I choose?**

Your city assigns you a limited amount of money, this represents the share of the local budget you are able to decide on. Each proposal is worth a different amount of money because the actual cost of implementation is also varying. You can vote for as
many proposals as you want, as long as you do not exceed the amount available to you. You can see how much money you have left to allocate in the process bar in the top centre of the page. The amount of the bar that is filled in green you have already allocated, the remaining white space can still be allocated.

Until you click **FINISH** you can select and deselect proposals. Once you click **FINISH** you can see all the proposals you voted upon clearly laid out in a tree diagram which shows you how much of your total amount each of your proposals represents.

6. **When can I participate in the voting process?**
   It will vary per municipality. If your city or municipality makes a process announcement, the municipality will explain timeline for each part of the process, submitting ideas, voting, monitoring. If the process is already opened in your municipality, it is time for you to participate.
   [add specific local context information here]

7. **How can I find the proposals that interest me?**
   On the left side of the page showing the proposals you can choose specific **Districts** such as Downtown or the Riverside (virtual districts right now), or filter according to **keywords** relevant such as Environmental Protection, Bicycles or Parks and Recreation. It is also possible to choose the amount of proposals shown, by determining the range through another filter on the left-hand side of the page. You can regulate the upper and lower amount limits of the proposals displayed by changing the size of the green bar with your mouse.
8. What happens with my vote?
After you have voted and the participatory process is finished you can monitor what happens with the proposals voted upon and see if they are approved. To do so, click on the green `START MONITORING` button which you find on the right side of the landing page inside of the third box titled `Process result`.

9. How can I follow up on the proposals?
You can also monitor the progress of the proposals. Like for the voting process you need to sign in to monitor the proposals. You can easily find the proposals you voted upon because your voting choice is saved. You can see how many votes the proposals receive and whether the process is completed or still in progress. If you click on the green `MONITOR` button underneath a proposal you will see more information and be able to comment on the proposals process. Your comment will be publicly visible.
Figure 6: Monitor chosen proposals

Figure 7: Overview of voted proposals
10. How can I voice my opinion on the results?
If you click on an individual proposal in the Process result section you can leave a comment underneath the proposal.

![Figure 8: The comment section](image)

11. When can I see the result of the voting process?
Every vote a proposal receives will be directly shown in the monitoring section. The timeframe from the voting to the publication of results by the city or municipality varies locally. If you do not get informed by your local administration when the process results are delivered you should check the Process result section regularly.

[add specific local context information here: time frame]

Process announcement

12. Can I also start a voting process as a citizen?
No. Voting processes can only be started by municipalities. Depending on your city or region, the voting process will be opened only once a year during the participatory budgeting process that helps to allocate next year’s budget or year-round and as many times as needed for voting on citizens’ proposals. Citizens can then submit proposals to city council’s participatory budgeting processes.

13. How can I as a citizen of my city/municipality submit my own ideas to be voted upon?
If you have an important idea for your city or municipality but no proposal addresses it so far, you might want to suggest an additional idea. Since only representatives of a city or municipality can add proposals to the process, you have to contact your local representatives to get your proposal included in the voting process.
14. How can I as an employee of my city/municipality open a voting process?
If you are in a public position inside your municipality, to start a public voting process you can also click on the green button which you find in the middle of the landing page inside of the first box titled Process announcement.

Advanced questions

15. Can I tell my friends?
Yes! Please do. The more people vote on the proposals important to you, the more likely is that they will be implemented. Share your vote through Twitter, Google+ and Facebook and ask others to participate too.

16. Where can I find more information about budgeting processes?
Here are some sources to learn more about money and the public budget.
The basics: http://www.cookingbudgets.com/basics/

Context specific questions

17. I can’t get the tool to work. Is there someone I can contact personally?

18. What is the financial situation of my city/municipality? [Why for example is it in debt?]

19. How much is the total budget of the city/municipality and which part can I vote upon?
20. Which areas of the budget can I vote upon? [For example, Environmental Protection, Parks and Recreation etc.]

[Questions should be translated into local languages] Ideally: Let participants allow to choose their preferred language (example https://www.eff.org/de/privacybadger).

6. Section 3: Budgeting Tutorial Outlook

During the large scale trials, we’ll be developing between three to five more tutorials that can be used to provide context to both participatory budgeting processes and Open Spending/OpenBudgets.eu. The tutorials are building on our own research as well as existing literature by the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) and the international Budget Partnership (IBP) and additional interviews with financial journalists and Budget Experts in inner and outer administration. The tutorials will be answering the most important aspects about budgets. The main component are visuals with additional textual explanations.

- A **Budget cycles** tutorial demonstrates the whole budget cycle over the fiscal year. When is the budget debated in the public domain, who influences the budget and how.
- The **Budget streams** tutorial visualizes the money streams between the national and local level. The tutorial explains how money is given and taken by the national and regional governments and who to hold accountable at which point.
- How to research **Budgetary items**, taking pension/elderly care as an example is another planned tutorial. The tutorial educates citizens who want to understand what is spend on one budget item and how to find it in the financial data.
- The tutorial on **Constants in budget** and obligations takes apart which budget items are fix and which one are flexible and open to influence them. The differences between the national and local level will be taken into account.
- The question of of **How government debt works** is answered in this tutorial. Why for example is a government in debt and can a government go bankrupt.
7. Conclusion

The objective of enabling citizens and other stakeholders engagement in the pre and post budget decision-making process is addressed by this deliverable in three ways. An inventory of existing participatory budgeting manuals, a tutorial/FAQ to accompany the tool for influencing budget allocation (D.7.2) and the tool for monitoring budget (D.7.3) execution, as well as an outlook and plan for future tutorials that will provide context for participatory budgeting tools and financial transparency tools as developed in OpenBudgets.eu.

An inventory existing participatory budgeting manuals with accompanying recommendations enables us and others with condensed learnings of how to make good tutorials that simultaneously fulfil the role of giving clear information and of encouraging participation. Tutorials which stand out have a clear structure, understandable language and corresponding visualizations. The quality and correctness of content, the scope of topics and appropriateness of depth is very much related to understandability. ‘As much information as necessary, as little information as possible’ in the language of the audience should be provided. In addition, the information needs to be findable. A highly important aspect is accountability, meaning that the outcomes of the process need to be be communicated in a way that reaches the participants and demonstrates the consequences of their efforts.

Building on the recommendations from the inventory and accompanying deliverables D7.2 and D7.3 we developed a tutorial in form on an FAQ. In the FAQ we answer possible questions participants might have which are related to voting and monitoring processes and tool functionalities. The FAQ addresses the need for a logical structure, goes by questions users/participants might have, uses simple language, offers different levels of engagement and different levels of information. A lot of information relevant to participants in participatory budgeting processes is context specific.

The difficulty about finding the right balance between simplifying and the need the specify should be addressed by enriching the FAQ with context specific information through each organizer of the individual Participatory Budgeting process in a city or municipality. The same is true for the language spoken. In our opinion educational resources need to be in the translated into local language, ideally by someone familiar with local habits. This allows a much more fine-tuned style in the tutorial, addressing different groups of participants in a familiar voice.

The tutorial should be adapted during the large scale trials to local learnings. At the same time we’ll be developing 3-5 additional tutorials addressing the most important aspects about budgets including budget cycles, budget streams, how to research budgetary items, Constants and obligations in budget and an explanation of how government debt works.
8. Literature


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<td>Toronto (Community Housing), Canada</td>
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